A stylized illustration of a palm tree with a long, curved green trunk and a fan of green fronds at the top. The base of the tree is a brown, stylized desert landscape with several rounded, rocky shapes. One of these shapes has a small diamond-shaped pattern. The background is a light green gradient.

Write it in Arabic

*A Workbook and Step-by-Step Guide
to Writing the Arabic Alphabet*

Naglaa Ghali

Write it in Arabic

A Workbook and Step-by-Step
Guide to Writing the Arabic Alphabet

Fun with Arabic



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Preface

Write it in Arabic is an alphabet guide and workbook that offers a hands-on approach to learning Arabic. Away from lengthy introductions and linguistic complications, this book will lead you directly into unravelling the mystery of the Arabic script and learning how to read and write it.

In this book, you will be introduced to the Arabic alphabet in sequence. You will practice writing the shape of each letter and you will learn how to join the letters to form words. This book will also guide you in the pronunciation of the different letters of the alphabet. You should become familiar with the shape and sound of each letter before moving on to the next one.

The words provided in the exercises have been carefully selected to help you practice the letters that you have already learned, while enriching your vocabulary. A set of easy-to-follow exercises is also included in Part Two. These exercises are designed to help you practice the Arabic style of writing and teach you new, frequently used, Arabic words.

By the end of the workbook, you should have a strong grasp of the Arabic alphabet and knowledge of its shape and sound. This will assist you greatly in further Arabic studies.

The Arabic Language

Arabic is spoken by more than 250 million people in over 22 countries. It is the official language of all Arab countries, hence forming a cultural bond among them. Arabic belongs to the Semitic group of languages which includes Hebrew, Aramaic, Ethiopic and others.

There are three basic forms of the language: classical, modern, and colloquial. The classical form is the language of old literary Arabic and the Arabic of the Qu'ran. The modern standard Arabic is the written and official language of the Arab world today. The colloquial form is the commonly spoken Arabic, which differs greatly from one country to another. Written Arabic, however, remains the same throughout the Arab world. The Arabic alphabet has also been adopted, with some modifications, by non-Semitic languages, including Persian, Urdu, Malay, and Pashto.

This workbook will introduce you to the modern standard Arabic, which is the written language of the Arab world today. Although this form is not the commonly spoken language, it is widely understood in all Arab countries, and shares several similarities with classical Arabic. You might sound out of place if you try to converse in modern standard Arabic, since the colloquial form is usually spoken. Nevertheless, this is the proper form of the language. The purpose of this book is to provide you with the basic skills for reading, writing, and understanding Arabic as it appears in newspapers, current literature, and educational materials.

Before You Start

The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters. The letters are written from right to left. To remain faithful to Arabic written work, this book opens like any book printed in Arabic. As well, you will write from right to left when completing the exercises.

When you write in Arabic, you join the letters together to form words. The shape of most letters changes according to their position in a word. There are, however, six letters that never change shape. In this book, we will refer to them as "disjoined letters." These letters do not join the letters following them and their shape does not change according to their position in a word. Joined letters, on the other hand, join the letters on their left and right. Most joined letters have more than one form. The short form of the letter is used at the beginning of a word or when it falls between two other joined letters. The long form is used when the letter falls at the end of a word or when it stands alone.

To complete the exercises in this workbook, start at the dot and follow the arrows. Try your best not to lift your pen when writing. Start with the basic shape of the letter, and then place any additional dots or strokes. Remember, any additional marks are placed from right to left. Pay attention to the writing line, and note which parts of the letter belong above or beneath the line. Do not confuse the name of the letter with its pronunciation. In Arabic, the name of the letter does not necessarily correspond to the sound it produces.

Part One

Letters and Numbers

alif



The *alif* is the first letter of the Arabic alphabet. It is a disjoined letter. This means that it does not join the letter following it. It does, however, join the letter preceding it, that is, the letter to its right. The *alif* is written as a vertical stroke from top to bottom. It has only one form and it rests on the writing line.



When the *alif* is joined to its right, it is written as a vertical stroke from the bottom up. The *alif* represents the long vowel *aa*. It can also represent the short vowels *a*, *i*, or *u*, which depends on its vocalisation (see pages 48 and 52).

baa', *taa'*, and *thaa'*



The *baa'*, *taa'*, and *thaa'* are all joined letters and each has two forms. The short form of the letter is used at the beginning of a word or between two other joined letters. The full form is written when the letter falls at the end of a word or when it stands alone.

The dot under the *baa'* is an integral part of the letter and must not be omitted. Similarly, the two dots on the *taa'* and the three dots on the *thaa'* must be kept.

اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب ^{start here} اَب
a father *abb*

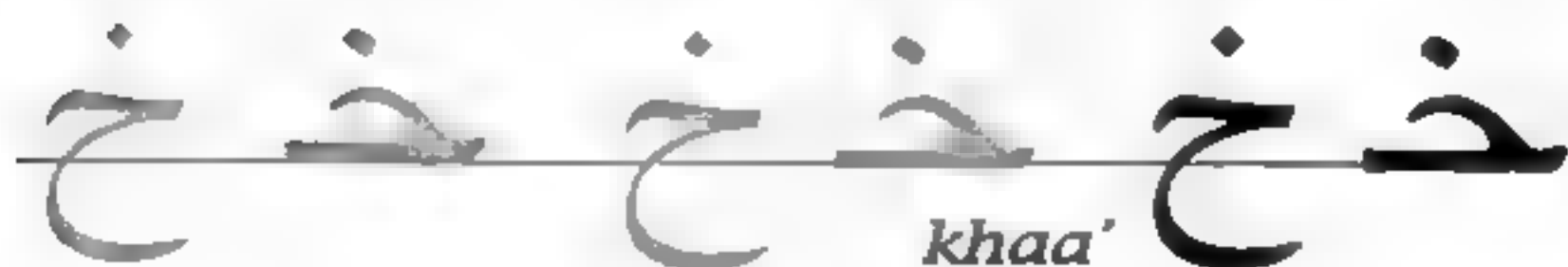
اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب
door *baab*

اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب
daddy *ba'ba*

اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب
to broadcast *bath*

اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب اَب
steadiness *thabaat*

geem, Haa', and khaa'



These three letters belong to the category of joined letters. They each have a short and long form and their shape changes according to their position in a word. The *geem* (also known as *jiim*) has a dot underneath, the *Haa'* has no dots, and the *khaa'* has one dot on top.

The short form rests on the writing line. The full form starts above the line and then curls beneath it.

حُب حُب حُب حُب حُب

love *Hub*

اُخْت اُخْت اُخْت اُخْت اُخْت

sister *'ukht*

بَحْث بَحْث بَحْث بَحْث بَحْث

research *baHth*

بَاح بَاح بَاح بَاح بَاح

to reveal *baaH*

تَحْتَ تَحْتَ تَحْتَ تَحْتَ تَحْتَ

under/below *taHat*

Notes and Review:

First Set of Letters

- © The letters *baa'* (ب), *taa'* (ت) and *thaa'* (ث) are easy to pronounce. The *baa'* is similar to the English letter *b*, as in the word "boy." Note that in the Arabic language there is no equivalent to the letter *p*, so the *baa'* is always used to transliterate the *p*.
- © The *taa'* has a familiar sound, much like the English letter *t* as in "toy."
- © The *thaa'* has no direct equivalent in English. Its sound is similar to the letters *th* as in "theatre."
- © The *geem* (ج) has two possible pronunciations, which depend on the specific dialect used. In Egyptian Arabic, for example, it is pronounced *g* as in "gap." Most other dialects pronounce it more like a *j* as in "John."
- © The *Haa'* (ح) is difficult to learn because it has no direct equivalent in English. The closest sound is the English letter *h*. The *Haa'*, however, has a more emphatic and heavy sound than the *h* (see page 42). When we refer to the *Haa'*, we will capitalise it to indicate the emphatic sound it produces.
- © The *khaa'* (خ) sounds like the letters *kh* as in "Khan" or *ch* as in "Bach."

حث حث حث حث

to urge/incite *Hath*

تاج تاج تاج تاج

crown *taag*

حج حج حج حج

pilgrimage *Hag*

بخت بخت بخت بخت

luck *bakhet*

باحث باحث باحث

researcher *baaHeth*

daal and dhaal



The *daal* and *dhaal* are both disjoined letters. They do not join the letter that follows, and their shape does not change according to their position in a word. They have only one form each, and they both rest on the writing line. The *dhaal* has one dot on top, while the *daal* has none.

The *daal* is equivalent to the English letter *d* as in “dad.” The *dhaal* has no direct equivalent in English. The closest sound is the letters *th* as in “this” or as in “with.” The *dhaal* is usually transliterated as *dh*.

raa' and zaay



The *raa'* and *zaay* (also known as *zayn*) belong to the family of disjoined letters and have only one form each. Both letters share the same basic shape. The *zaay*, however, has a dot on top while the *raa'* has none. Each letter starts above the writing line and then curves below it. Note that approximately one third of the letter appears above the line and two thirds beneath it.

The sound of the letter *raa'* is similar to the English letter *r* as in "Rome." The *zaay* is equivalent to the letter *z* as is "zoo."

ارز ارز ارز ارز ارز ارز ارز
rice *urz*

حر حر حر حر حر حر حر
hot (weather) *Harr*

برد برد برد برد برد برد
cold *bard*

جار جار جار جار جار جار
neighbour *gaar*

زبد زبد زبد زبد زبد زبد
butter *zibd*

seen and sheen



The *seen* and *sheen* belong to the family of joined letters. They each have a short and a long form. The two letters share the same shape except that the *sheen* has three dots arranged as a triangle on top.

The short form rests on the writing line. The long form starts on the line and then descends underneath it, forming a semicircle.

The letter *seen* is equivalent to the English letter *s*. The *sheen* sounds like the letters *sh* as in "she."

اُستَاذِ اُستَاذِ اُستَاذِ

mister/professor *ustaaaz*

جَرَسِ جَرَسِ جَرَسِ

bell *garas*

اُسَااسِ اُسَااسِ اُسَااسِ

foundation '*asaas*

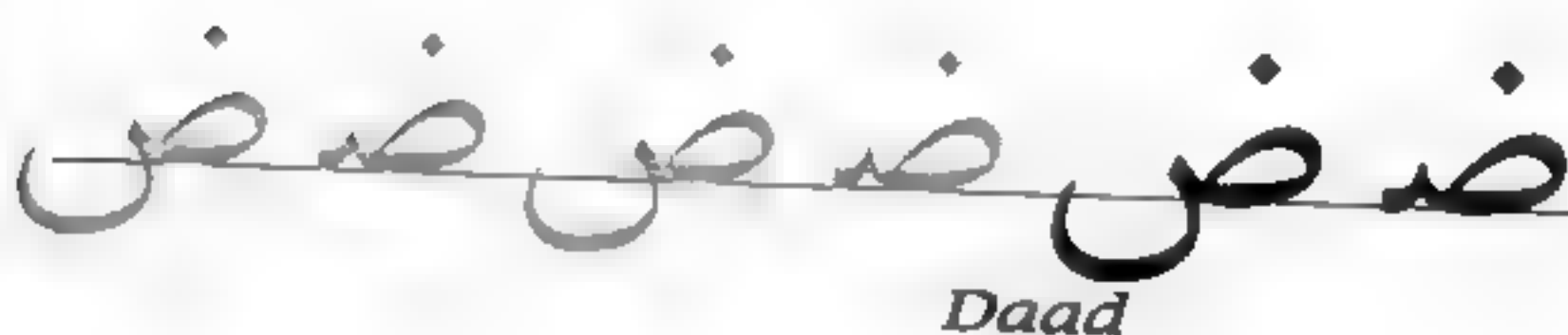
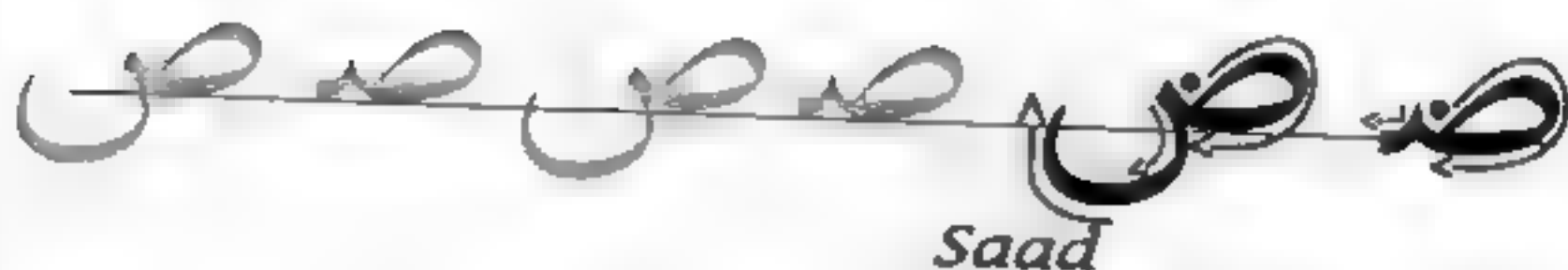
شَبَابِ شَبَابِ شَبَابِ

youth *shabaab*

خَدَشِ خَدَشِ خَدَشِ

to scratch *khadsh*

Saad and Daad



These two letters have no direct equivalent in English. The *Saad* sounds like a heavy s. Try pronouncing the word "sun" while stressing the s. The *Daad* also has no equivalent in English. The closest pronunciation to the letter *Daad* is the sound of a stressed *d* as in the English word "dome."

Both letters belong to the family of joined letters and they have two forms each. The short form of the letter rests on the writing line. The long form starts on the line, curves underneath it, and then comes up again to rest just above the line. Take special note of the upward stroke in the short form of both letters.

صبح صبح صبح صبح
morning **Sabaah**

حصد حصد حصد حصد
to harvest **HaSad**

خاص خاص خاص خاص
private **khaaS**

ضباب ضباب ضباب ضباب
fog **Dabaab**

ارض ارض ارض ارض
land **aarD**

Taa' and Zaa'



Taa' and *Zaa'* belong to the family of joined letters. However, they have only one form each and their shape does not change according to their position in a word. They rest on the writing line. To write the letters, start with the bottom part first and add the stroke. Then, add a dot on the *Zaa'*

Neither of these letters has a direct equivalent in English. The *Taa'* sounds like a bold or stressed *t*. The *Zaa'* (which has one dot) sounds like a stressed *z*.

طباخ طباخ طباخ طباخ

cook *Tabaakh*

خطأ خطأ خطأ خطأ

mistake/error *khaTaa'*

بط بط بط بط بط بط

duck *baT*

حظ حظ حظ حظ حظ

luck *HaZ*

ضابط ضابط ضابط ضابط

officer *DaabbiT*

Notes and Review:

Second Set of Letters

You have been introduced to four new letters whose sounds are unfamiliar to non-Arabic speakers: *Saad* (ص), *Daad* (ض), *Taa'* (ط), and *Zaa'* (ظ). However, they are not hard to master. These letters do have familiar equivalents in English, but they need to be pronounced much more forcefully and in a deeper tone. In this book, we will capitalise all references to these letters to indicate the emphatic sound they produce.

Pay careful attention that you distinguish the sounds of these letters from similar letters learned previously. The similar couples are as follows:

- © The *Saad* (ص) and the *seen* (س): The *seen* sounds like the English letter *s*, while the *Saad* sounds like a deep and bold *s*.
- © The *Daad* (ض) and the *daal* (د): The *daal* is equivalent to the English letter *d*, while the *Daad* is a more forceful and bolder *d*.
- © The *Taa'* (ط) and the *taa'* (ت): The letter *Taa'* is a bold strong *t*. The letter *taa'* is the direct equivalent to the letter *t*.
- © Finally, do not mistake the sound of the *Zaa'* (ظ) for the *zaay* (ز). The *Zaa'* is a strong bold *z*, while the *zaay* is the direct equivalent to the English letter *z*.

صبر صبر صبر صبر صبر
patience **Sabr**

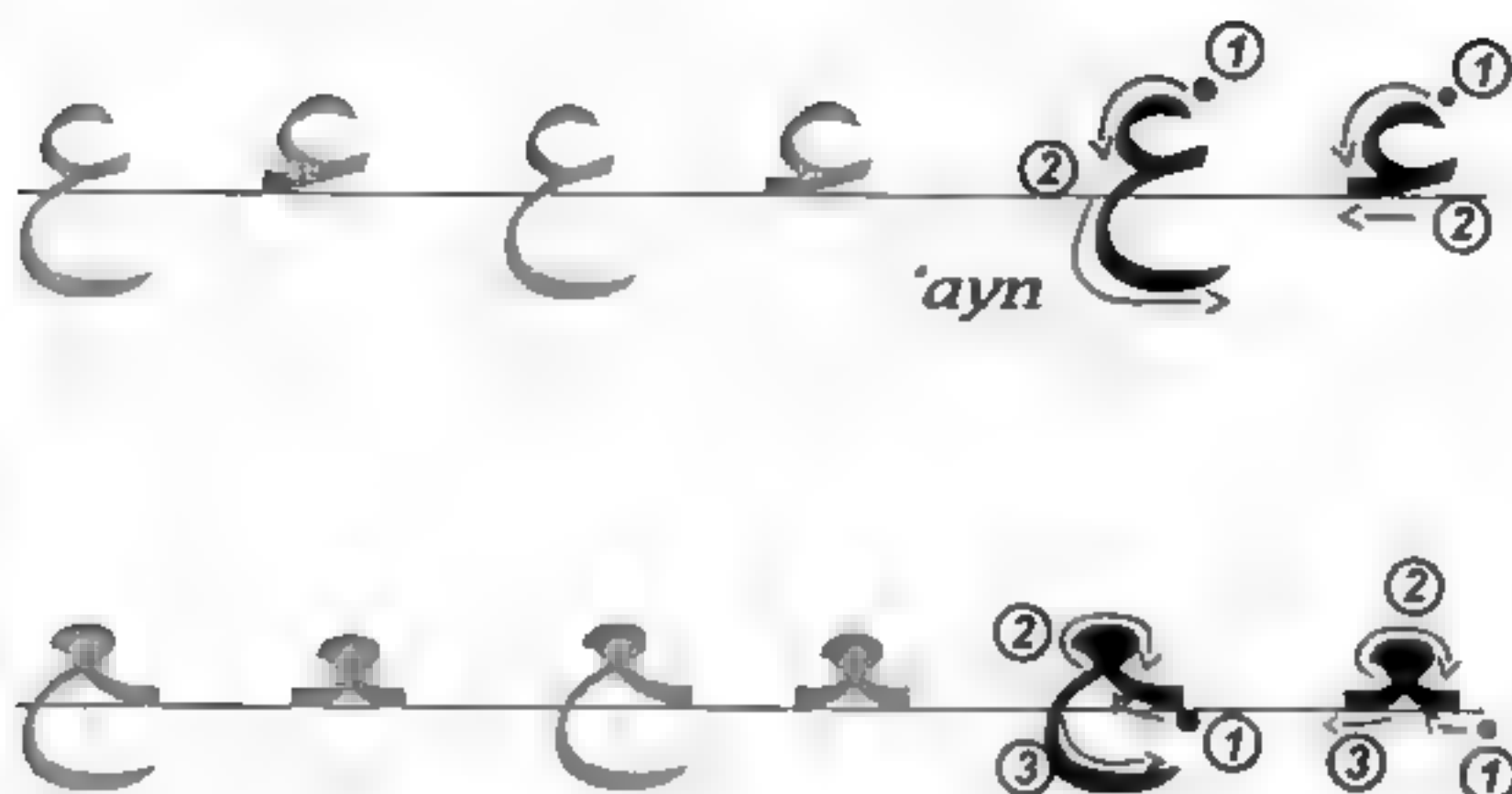
نستر نستر نستر نستر نستر
to hide/conceal **saTr**

نسطر نسطر نسطر نسطر نسطر
line **saTr**

درس درس درس درس درس
lesson **dars**

دسر دسر دسر دسر دسر
tooth **Ders**

'ayn



The 'ayn is difficult to learn. It is a joined letter and has four different shapes. The first, reading from right to left, appears at the beginning of a word and rests on the writing line.

The second shape is used when the 'ayn is standing alone, or at the end of a word after a disjointed letter. It begins just above the line and continues underneath.

The third form of the 'ayn falls in the middle of a word between two joined letters. The last example, shows the 'ayn when it falls at the end of a word after a joined letter. It begins on top of the line and then curves below it.

عَيْش عَيْش عَيْش عَيْش
bread 'eysh

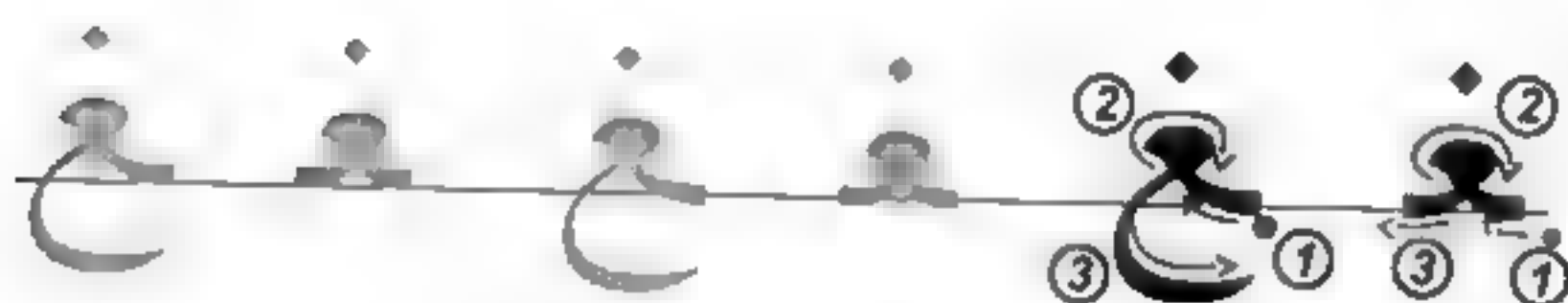
شَارِع شَارِع شَارِع شَارِع
street shara'

صَعْب صَعْب صَعْب صَعْب
difficult sa'b

طَبَعاً طَبَعاً طَبَعاً طَبَعاً
of course Taba'an

رَبْع رَبْع رَبْع رَبْع رَبْع
quarter roba'

ghayn



The *ghayn* is similar in shape to the letter '*ayn*'; the only difference is that the *ghayn* has a dot on top while the '*ayn* has none.

The '*ayn* and *ghayn* have no direct equivalent in English. Their sounds are not familiar to most non-Arabic speakers. You need to listen carefully to their pronunciation and try to practice the sound. The *ghayn* is transliterated as *gh*, while the '*ayn* is usually transcribed as ' indicating that this sound is unique and there is no match in the English alphabet. If you still find it hard to master the sound of the '*ayn*, try to think of it as an emphatic or long *a*, as in Verdi's opera "Aida." This is not really accurate, but it will be the closest sound it imitates. The closest sound for the *ghayn* are the letters *gh* in "Baghdad."

غَرَاب غَرَاب غَرَاب غَرَاب
raven *ghorab*

غَرْب غَرْب غَرْب غَرْب
west *gharb*

غَدَاً غَدَاً غَدَاً غَدَاً
tomorrow *ghadan*

بَغْدَادِ بَغْدَادِ بَغْدَادِ بَغْدَادِ
Baghdad

تَبَغ تَبَغ تَبَغ تَبَغ
tobacco *tabgh*

faa' and *qaaf*



The *faa'* and *qaaf* share the same short form, but their long forms are different. Their short forms rest on the writing line. The *faa'* has one dot while the *qaaf* has two. The long form of the *faa'* is elongated and rests on the line, whereas that of the *qaaf* starts just above the line and then descends beneath it forming half a circle.

Faa' is similar to the English letter *f*. The *qaaf* has no direct equivalent; the closest you can find to its sound is the letter *q* as in "Iraq."

فَقَدَ فَقَدَ فَقَدَ فَقَدَ فَقَدَ

to lose *faqad*

تَفَاحَ تَفَاحَ تَفَاحَ تَفَاحَ تَفَاحَ

apples *tufaaH*

قَطَفَ قَطَفَ قَطَفَ قَطَفَ قَطَفَ

to pick (flowers) *qaTaf*

قَطَارَ قَطَارَ قَطَارَ قَطَارَ قَطَارَ

train *qeTaar*

شَرْقَ شَرْقَ شَرْقَ شَرْقَ شَرْقَ

east *sharq*

kaaf



Kaaf is a joined letter, and has two forms. The short form is used in the beginning or middle of a word. To write the *kaaf*, start with the base of the letter and then add the top stroke.

The full form occurs when the letter stands alone or at the end of a word. The full form rests on the writing line. What's inside the *kaaf* is a *hamza*, (see page 48). It is an integral part of the letter, but has no effect on its pronunciation.

The letter *kaaf* is similar in its pronunciation to the English letter *k*.

گتاب کتاب کتاب کتاب
book *kitaab*

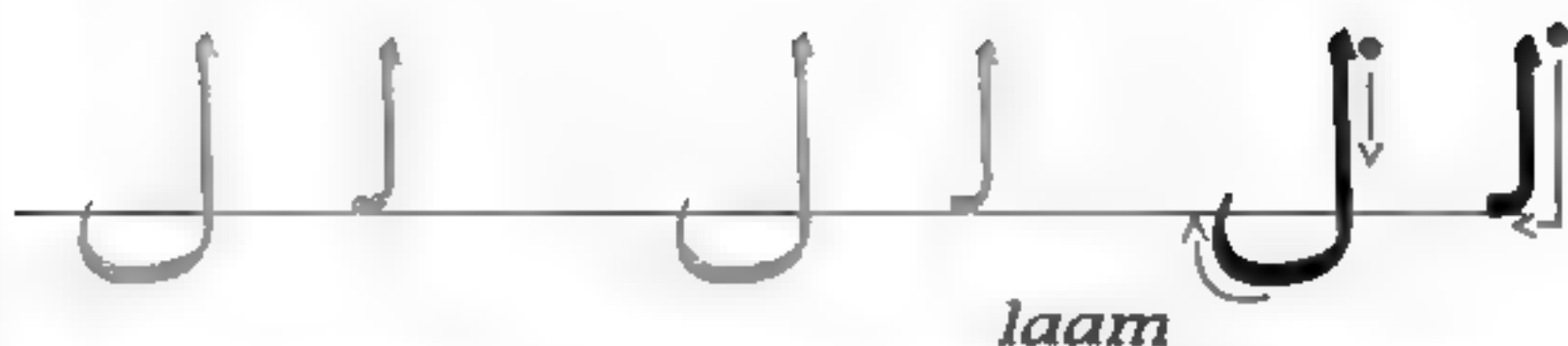
سگر سگر سگر سگر
sugar *sukar*

شکراً شکراً شکراً شکراً
thank you *shukraan*

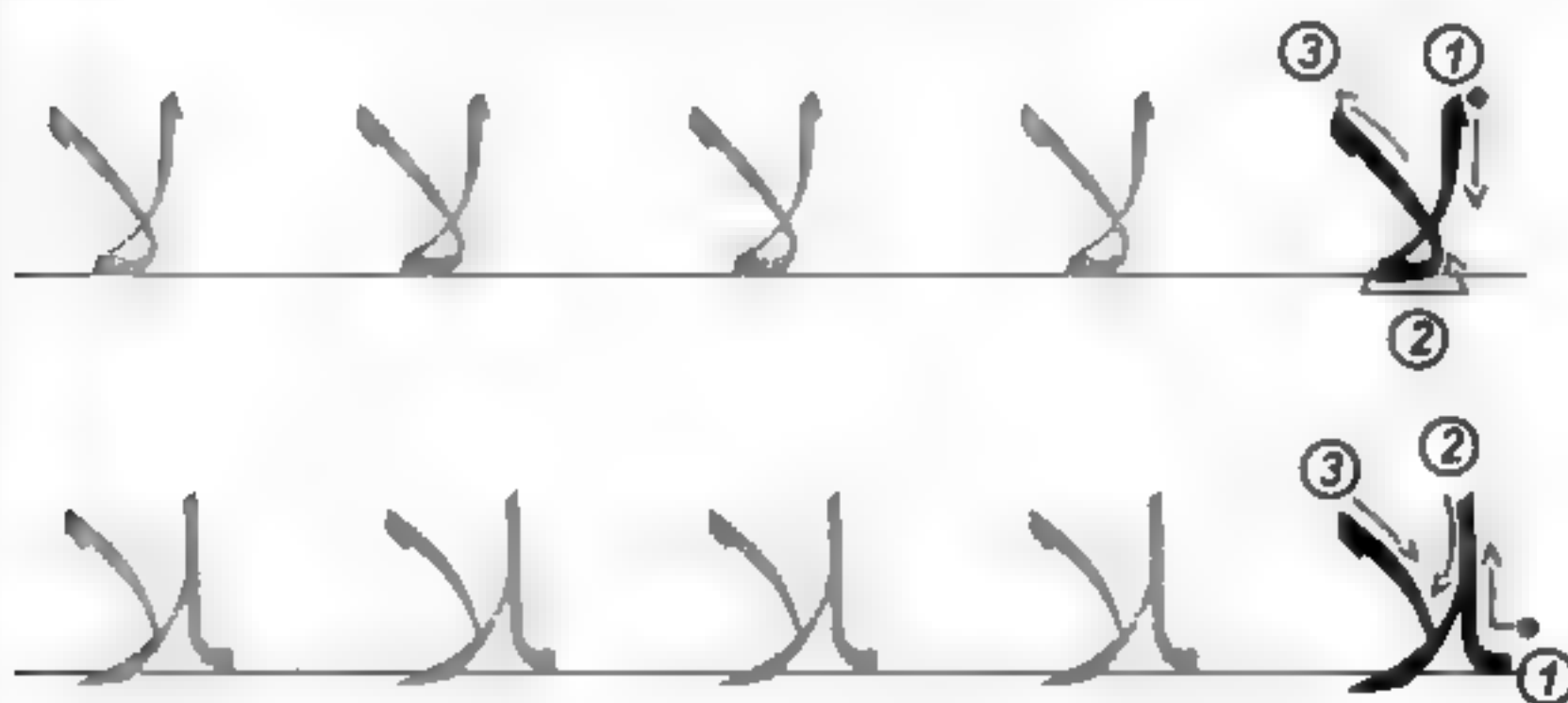
گشک گشک گشک گشک
kiosk *kushek*

شباك شباك شباك شباك
window *shubbaak*

laam



The *laam* is similar to the English letter *l*. It is a joined letter and has two forms. The short form rests on the writing line. The full form starts above the line; its tail descends below the line and then curves up again just above it.



The *laam* and the *alif* have a unique shape when they are joined together. The first example shows the two letters when standing alone. The second shape is used when the *laam* is joined from its right; it then connects with the *alif* to form this distinctive shape. Remember that the *alif* is a disjoined letter, meaning it never joins the letter following it.

لتر لتر لتر لتر لتر
liter *letr*

كلب كلب كلب كلب كلب
dog *kaleb*

الف الف الف الف الف
thousand *alf*

فلفل فلفل فلفل فلفل فلفل
pepper *felfel*

تلال تلال تلال تلال تلال
hills *telaal*

Notes and Review:

The Prefix *alif laam*



At this point, let us pause to discuss the definite article "the."

In Arabic there is no equivalent to the English "the." The prefix *alif laam* (ا) serves instead as the definite article. It is also worth noting that in Arabic an adjective has to agree with a noun; if the noun is masculine or feminine, definite or indefinite, singular or plural, the adjective must follow the same form.

In the last two examples (on the facing page) you will notice that since the *alif laam* prefix indicates that the noun is definite, its adjective must have the prefix agree as well.

You will find the definite article used more frequently in Arabic than in English, especially in general terms and in expressions like love, life, or patience. For example, "life is beautiful" becomes "the life is beautiful."

There are no indefinite articles such as "a" and "an" in the Arabic language, you simply leave them out.

الصبر الصبر الصبر الصبر
patience *el-saber*

الرجل الرجل الرجل الرجل
the man *el-ragoul*

الأخبار الأخبار الأخبار الأخبار
the news *el-akhbaar*

الدور الرابع الدور الرابع
the fourth floor *el-door el-raba'*

البرد القارس البرد القارس
the bitter cold *el-bard el-qareess*

meem



The letter *meem* corresponds to the English letter *m* as in "moon." It is a joined letter with two forms. The short form rests on the writing line, while the full form begins on the line and then descends underneath it.



When the final *meem* is joined to another letter, it is usually written as a circle counter-clockwise. After completing the circle, you add the tail.

مَلِكْ مَلِكْ مَلِكْ مَلِكْ

king *malek*

مَطَارْ مَطَارْ مَطَارْ مَطَارْ

airport *maTaar*

قَمَرْ قَمَرْ قَمَرْ قَمَرْ

moon *qamar*

تَمَامْ تَمَامْ تَمَامْ تَمَامْ

perfect *tamaam*

مَطْعَمْ مَطْعَمْ مَطْعَمْ مَطْعَمْ

restaurant *maT'am*

noon



The *noon* is a joined letter with two forms. The short form rests on the writing line and is similar in shape to the letters *baa'* (ب), *taa'* (ت), and *thaa'* (ث), which you studied earlier. The long form is different. It is round, resembling half a circle, and begins above the line and then curls underneath it.

The *noon* has only one dot, positioned as shown above. The dot is an integral part of the letter. Remember, it is always best to write the basic part of the letter first, and then add any additional dots or strokes. The *noon* is similar in its pronunciation to the English letter *n* as in "near."

نَارَ نَارَ نَارَ نَارَ نَارَ
fire *naar*

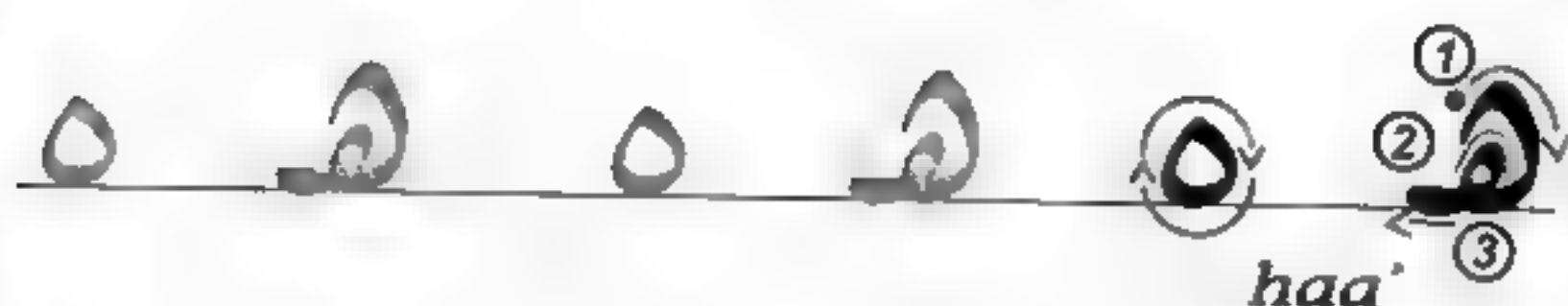
بَنَكْ بَنَكْ بَنَكْ بَنَكْ بَنَكْ
bank *bank*

لَبَنَ لَبَنَ لَبَنَ لَبَنَ لَبَنَ
milk *laban*

حَنَانِ حَنَانِ حَنَانِ حَنَانِ حَنَانِ
tenderness *Hanaan*

فَنجَانِ فَنجَانِ فَنجَانِ فَنجَانِ فَنجَانِ
cup *fingaan*

haa'



The *haa'* has four shapes. Reading from right to left, you notice the first form, when the *haa'* falls at the beginning of a word. The second form—the egg-shaped *haa'*—illustrates the letter when standing alone or at the end of a word after a disjointed letter. The third form occurs when the *haa'* falls between two joined letters, and the last shape, when the *haa'* falls at the end of a word after a joined letter.

The *haa'* is pronounced like the English letter *h*. Many students of the Arabic language confuse the sounds of the *haa'* and the *Haa'* (هـ). The latter (see page 10) has no equivalent in English, but sounds like a heavily accented *h*.

هرم هرم هرم هرم هرم
pyramid *haram*

هدد هدد هدد هدد هدد
hoopoe (type of bird) *hodhod*

انتباه انتباه انتباه انتباه
attention *intebaah*

شهر شهر شهر شهر شهر
month *shahr*

جنيه جنيه جنيه جنيه
pound (currency) *gineeh*

waaw



The *waaw* is similar in pronunciation to the English letter *w*. It can also represent the long vowel *oo*. The letter starts with a circle written clockwise, which starts and ends on the line. The tail of the letter descends in a slight curve beneath the writing line. The *waaw* is another disjoined letter and has only one form.

Remember, a disjoined letter joins the letter to its right, but **does not join** the letter that follows it. Disjoined letters have only one shape, as their form does not change according to their position in a word. The six disjoined letters are the *alif* (ا), *daal* (د), *dhaal* (ذ), *raa'* (ر), *zaay* (ز), and *waaw* (و).

ورق ورق ورق ورق ورق
paper waraq

لون لون لون لون لون
colour lown

صوت صوت صوت صوت صوت
voice/sound Sout

ورد ورد ورد ورد ورد
flowers ward

وصول وصول وصول وصول وصول
arrival weSool

yaa'



The *yaa'* has two forms. The short form should by now look familiar to you. This time it rests on the writing line with two dots underneath. The full form is unique. It starts above the line, curves beneath it, and then up again. Remember, the short form of the letter is used at the beginning of a word, or when it falls between two other joined letters. The full form appears when the letter is standing alone or at the end of a word.

The *yaa'* is similar to the English letter *y*. It can also represent the sound of the long vowel *ee*.

یوم یوم یوم یوم یوم یوم
day yoom

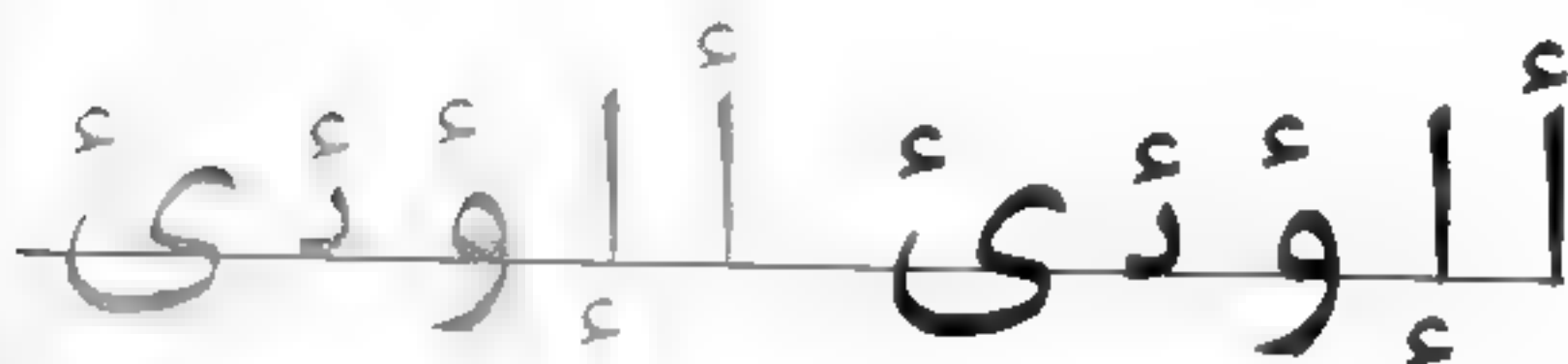
یمین یمین یمین یمین یمین یمین
right yemeen

شای شای شای شای شای شای
tea shaay

تاکسی تاکسی تاکسی تاکسی تاکسی تاکسی
taxi taxi

حبیبی حبیبی حبیبی حبیبی حبیبی حبیبی
my love Habeebi

hamza



The *hamza* has no specific sound. It indicates a glottal stop. It is usually transcribed as an apostrophe and it indicates a vocal break. The *hamza* is usually carried by the *alif*, the *waaw*, or the *yaa'*. It can also occur alone at the end of a word; in this case the *hamza* is placed on the writing line.

The *hamza* and the *alif* have a unique relationship together. The *hamza* can occur above or under the *alif*. When the *hamza* occurs above the letter, (اْ) the *alif* is pronounced as an *a*. When the *hamza* occurs underneath, the *alif* (اِ) is pronounced as an *i*.

أَنْبَاءً أَنْبَاءً أَنْبَاءً أَنْبَاءً

news *anbaa'*

إِمْلَاءً إِمْلَاءً إِمْلَاءً إِمْلَاءً

dictation *imlaa'*

سُؤَالٌ سُؤَالٌ سُؤَالٌ سُؤَالٌ

question *su'oaal*

رَأِيسٌ رَأِيسٌ رَأِيسٌ رَأِيسٌ

president *ra'ees*

شَيْءٌ شَيْءٌ شَيْءٌ شَيْءٌ

thing *shee'*

taa' marbouta



The *taa' marbouta* is not an alphabet letter; it is more of a feminine mark. In Arabic, all nouns are either masculine or feminine. Most, although not all, feminine nouns end with the *taa' marbouta*. A masculine noun can end in any letter. Remember that a noun and an adjective have to agree, so if a noun is feminine, its adjective will also end with the same feminine mark.

For example:

Happy family	<i>'a'yla s'eeda</i>	عائلة سعيدة
Pretty woman	<i>imra'a gameela</i>	إمرأة جميلة

The *taa' marbouta* is found only at the end of a word. It has two forms that are a variation of the letter *haa'* (see page 42). The egg shape with two dots is used when the *taa' marbouta* falls at the end of a word after a disjoined letter. The second shape is used when it falls at the end of a word after a joined letter. The *taa' marbouta* is commonly pronounced as an *a*.

دكتور دكتور دكتور دكتور
doctor **duktoor**




دكتورة دكتورة دكتورة
doctor (female) **duktoora**

جميلة جميلة جميلة
pretty **gameela**

قهوة قهوة قهوة قهوة
coffee **qahwa**

هدية هدية هدية هدية
gift **hedeeya**

Vowel marks

Arabic has three special vowel marks, which are not letters of the alphabet. The first vowel mark is the *kasra* (). It is written below the consonant it vocalises and represents the short vowel *i* as in "pit." The second vowel mark, *fatHaa* (), is written above the letter and represents the vowel *a* like in "sat". The third, the *dama* (), is written above the letter and represents the short vowel *u* as in "up."



Example:

baa' and a *kasra*  is pronounced bi

baa' and *fatHaa*  is pronounced ba

baa' and a *dama*  is pronounced bu

The pronunciation of a word, and therefore its meaning, can change according to its vocalisation. This is demonstrated in the examples on the facing page.

There are two additional marks to discuss, which are not vowel marks but do affect the way a word is pronounced. The first is the *shadda* (). When the *shadda* occurs above a consonant, the consonant is pronounced as a doubled letter. The other is the *tanween* mark, which resembles two *fatHaas* stacked one on the other (). The *tanween* sounds like an *n* and usually appears over the *alif*. It can only be placed at the end of a word (see the example *shukraan* on page 33).

كُتِبَ كُتِبَ كُتِبَ كُتِبَ

to write *kataba*

كُتُبَ كُتُبَ كُتُبَ كُتُبَ

books *kotoub*

مَدْرَسَةٌ مَدْرَسَةٌ مَدْرَسَةٌ

school *madrasa*

مُدْرَسَةٌ مُدْرَسَةٌ مُدْرَسَةٌ

teacher (female) *modarresa*

شُبَّاک شُبَّاک شُبَّاک شُبَّاک

window *shubbak*

Numbers

The number system we use in English was developed from the Arabic more than 500 years ago, and is today commonly known as the Arabic numeral system. Over the years, however, numbers in both parts of the world evolved in different ways. For our purposes, we will refer to numbers used in English as "European numerals" and those used in the Arabic language as "Arabic numerals."

As both systems share the same origin, there are a number of similarities between Arabic and European numerals. Most importantly, numbers composed in Arabic are written from left to right, exactly as in English. So, when you combine words and numbers, you read the word from right to left, but the number from left to right.

Example: **House No. 6702**

Translates to: بيت رقم : ٦٧٠٢

© Pay careful attention to the zero (•), which resembles a dot, and the five (٥), which resembles a zero in European numerals.

© In North African countries, European numerals are used in place of Arabic ones, which means that the previous example reads: بيت رقم : 6702

© Today, with new Web technologies, you will find many Arabic Web sites using European numerals instead of Arabic ones.

3 2 1

6 5 4

9 8 7

12 11 10

22 21 20

50 40 30

70 70 70 70 70 70

65

17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17.

170

71.3 71.3 71.3 71.3

6803

24071 24071 24071

24568

391.7407 391.7407

39106457

الساعة ١٢ الساعة ١٢ الساعة ١٢

12 o'clock

el saa'a itnasher

٤٥٠ مدعو ٤٥٠ مدعو ٤٥٠ مدعو

450 guests

robo'umya wa khamseen mad'oo

شارع ٣٠٨ شارع ٣٠٨ شارع ٣٠٨

street 308

shara' tholthomeea wa thamania

١٦٠ دولار ١٦٠ دولار ١٦٠ دولار

160 dollars

meea wa seteyn dollar

صفحة ٧٩ صفحة ٧٩ صفحة ٧٩

page 79

safHaa tesa' wa sab'eyn

Handwriting

ا ب ب ت ت ث ج ج ح
خ د ذ ر ز س س ش
ص ض ض ط ظ ع غ
ف ف ق ك ك ل م ن
ه ه و ي
١ ٢ ٣ ٤ ٥ ٦ ٧ ٨ ٩ ١٠

Until now, we have concentrated on the printed version of the Arabic alphabet. There are only a few differences between printed and handwritten Arabic. The next few pages will guide you through handwritten script. It is recommended, however, that you learn the classic or printed form of writing first, since you can't go wrong with printing. As your comfort level with the alphabet progresses, you will be able to develop your own writing style.

Notes on Handwriting

- ☉ When a letter has more than one dot on top or bottom, the dots are usually joined together. For example, the two dots under the *yaa'* (ي) join to form a dash, and the three dots on top of the *thaa'* (ث) form a triangle.
- ☉ In handwritten Arabic, the *seen* (س) and the *sheen* (ش) lose their sharp upward points and are written as a flat line.
- ☉ Letters that end with a dot, such as the *noon*, *Daad*, *qaaf*, and *sheen*, are sometimes written with an outside stroke in place of the dot (ن ف د ش).
- ☉ The final *noon* can be written in two different ways. The dot can be replaced by an outside stroke or it can coil inside the letter (ن).
- ☉ When writing the *kaaf*, a curl can sometimes be placed inside it, instead of the *hamza* (ك).
- ☉ The middle *haa'* is handwritten as (ه) and the final form can be written as: ه . Similarly, the *taa' marbouta* will be written as: ه .
- ☉ In numbers, the upward point of number two is flattened out (٢), and number three (٣) loses one of its points. Note that three in handwriting resembles two in print; try not to confuse between them.

شرق شرق
East *sharq*

ثلج تلج
snow/ice *thalg*

قماش قماسه قماش
cloth *qumaash*

نهر نهر نهر
river *nahr*

ارض ارض ارض
land *ard*

مستشفى مستشفى مستشفى

hospital *mustashfa*

مشكلة مشكلة مشكلة

problem *mushkela*

تأمين تأمين تأمين

insurance *ta'meen*

جمرك جمرك جمرك

customs *gumruk*

فندق فندق فندق

hotel *funduq*

Part Two

Exercises

Exercise 1

In this exercise, you are given the short form of the letter. Write the long form. The first one has been done for you. Be sure to practice a few times.

_____ -A ت ت ت ت

_____ -F ز

_____ -B ق

_____ -G ش

_____ -C غ

_____ -H ل

_____ -D ك

_____ -I ف

_____ -E ه

_____ -J ء

Exercise 2

In this exercise, you are given the long form of the letter. Write the short form. Practice a few times.

_____ -A ك _____ -F س

_____ -B ض _____ -G ي

_____ -C ث _____ -H م

_____ -D خ _____ -I ق

_____ -E ظ _____ -J ع

Exercise 3

Write the missing letters in the squares provided. The first exercise is done for you.

م	ر	ك	ب
---	---	---	---

A- مركب
boat *markeb*

		ن
--	--	---

B- نعم
yes *n'm*

	ل	
--	---	--

C- قلب
heart *qalb*

ر			
---	--	--	--

D- صغير
small *sagheer*

	ب	
--	---	--

_____ -E جبل
mountain *gabel*

ف		
---	--	--

_____ -F صيف
summer *Säeef*

			ر
--	--	--	---

_____ -G ربيع
spring *rabeeʿ*

	ا		
--	---	--	--

_____ -H شتاء
winter *shetaaʿ*

			خ
--	--	--	---

_____ -I خريف
autumn *khareef*

Exercise 4

In this exercise, you are given the words in handwritten script. Write the letters in the squares provided. The first word is done for you.

و	ق	ت
---	---	---

A- وقت
time *waqt*

			ط
--	--	--	---

B- طريق
road/path *Tareeq*

م		
---	--	--

C- سهم
arrow *sahm*

	ل		
--	---	--	--

D- مغلق
closed *moghlaq*

--	--	--	--

-F حُرِيَّة
freedom **Hureeya**

--	--	--	--

-F صَدِيق
friend **Sadeeq**

--	--	--	--

-G خُرُوج
exit **khroug**

--	--	--	--

-H سَلَام
peace **salam**

--	--	--	--

-I مُفَتِّش
inspector **mufatesh**

Exercise 5

Match each profession to its Arabic equivalent. Use the transliteration as a guide. The first exercise is done for you.

i- Farmer

falaaH

A- صحفي

ii- Engineer

muhandis

B- فلاح

iii- Journalist

SaHafee

C- محامي

iv- Teacher

mudaris

D- مهندس

v- Lawyer

muHaamy

E- مدرس

vi-Manager (female)
mudeera

_____F-سائق

vii- Driver
sa'aek

_____G-مديرة

viii- Consultant
mustashaar

_____H-صيدلي

ix- Employee (female)
muwaZafa

_____I-ممرضة

x- Nurse(female)
mumareDa

_____J-موظفة

xi- Pharmacist
Saydalee

_____K-مستشار

Exercise 6

Rearrange these Arab countries according to their alphabetical order.

_____ ليبيا -F
Libya

_____ مصر -A
Egypt

_____ اليمن -G
Yemen

_____ الاردن -B
Jordan

_____ لبنان -H
Lebanon

_____ سوريا -C
Syria

_____ تونس -I
Tunisia

_____ المغرب -D
Morocco

_____ البحرين -J
Bahrain

_____ قطر -E
Qatar

Exercise 7

Rearrange these Arab capitals according to their alphabetical order.

_____ -F عمان

Amman

_____ -A طرابلس

Tripoli

_____ -G بغداد

Baghdad

_____ -B الرياض

Riyadh

_____ -H الرباط

Rabat

_____ -C صنعاء

Sana'a

_____ -I أبو ظبي

Abu Dhabi

_____ -D بيروت

Beirut

_____ -J دمشق

Damascus

_____ -E الخرطوم

Khartoum

Exercise 8

Match each Arabic number to its English equivalent.

i- 565

١٢ -A

ii- 91

١٩ -B

iii- 060

٥٦٠ -C

iv- 19

٩١ -D

v- 12

١٢ -E

Exercise 9

Match each of the following house and street numbers to its English equivalent.

i- House 985

A- شارع رقم ٨٥٠٦

ii- Street 6058

B- بيت رقم ٥٨٩

iii- Street 8056

C- شارع رقم ٨٠٥٦

iv- Street 8506

D- شارع رقم ٦٠٥٨

v- House 589

E- بيت رقم ٩٨٥

Exercise 10

Solve these simple equations. Remember, answers must be in Arabic.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 17 + 28 \text{ -F}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 20 \times 8 \text{ -A}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 7 \div 28 \text{ -G}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 100 - 300 \text{ -B}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 00 - 100 \text{ -H}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 80 + 20 \text{ -C}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 3 \div 77 \text{ -I}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 12 \times 8 \text{ -D}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 0 \times 7 \text{ -J}$$

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} = 10 \div 20 \text{ -E}$$

Exercise 11

Match each Arabic date, price, and quantity to its English equivalent.

i- 893/4 kilos

٢٠٠٣/٧/١٨ -A

ii- 505 liras

٥١,٢٥ دولار -B

iii- 5.5 liras

١٩٨١/٧/٣٠ -C

iv- 51.25 dollars

٨٩,٣/٤ كيلو -D

v- 25.51 dollars

٥٠٥ ليرة -E

vi- 18/7/2003

٥,٥ ليرة -F

vii- 30/7/1981

٢٥,٥١ دولار -G

Exercise 12

Join the letters together to form a word. The first exercise is done for you.

A- بيت بيت
house/home *beyt*

B- سوق سوق
market *souq*

C- سهم سهم
arrow *sahm*

D- نور نور
light *noor*

E- خطر خطر
danger *khaTar*

-F م م ن و ع

forbidden *mamnoo'*

-G ج ا م ع ة

university *gama'a*

-H ص غ ي ر

small *Sagheer*

-I ا ل ق ا ه ر ة

Cairo *el-qahera*

-J أ و ت و ب ي س

bus *utoobees*

-K ج بل

mountain *gabal*

-L ح فلة

party *Hafla*

-M س كوت

silence *sekoot*

-N ص ح راء

desert *Sahraa'*

-O ص دى ق

friend *Sadeeq*

-P ك ل ا م

talk *kalaam*

-Q ع ا ئ ل ة

family 'a'yla

-R م غ ل ق

closed *mughlaq*

-S م ش ك ل ة

problem *mushkela*

-T ف ا ك ه ة

fruit *faakeha*

Exercise 13

Match each noun with an adjective. You are given the translation of the noun followed by the required adjective combination. However, of the three adjectives next to each noun, only one is correct.

_____ سعيد

_____ سعيدة

_____ السعيد

_____ البعيدة

_____ بعيد

_____ البعيد

_____ العالى

_____ على

_____ عالية

_____ شقية

_____ شقى

_____ الشقى

_____ -A يوم

Day (good day)

_____ -B البحر

Sea (the far sea)

_____ -C جبل

Mountain
(a high mountain)

_____ -D طفلة

Child (naughty child)

قديمة

القديم

قديم

الجديد

جديدة

الجديدة

النظيفة

نظيفة

لأنظيفة

الثاني

الثانية

ثاني

-E بيت

House
(an old house)

-F المدير

Manager
(the new manager)

-G حجرة

Room
(a clean room)

-H الدور

Floor
(the second floor)

Exercise 14

Make each adjective either definite or feminine according to the noun provided. The first example is done for you

البحر الاحمر

The Red Sea

A- البحر (احمر)

The expensive restaurant

B- المطعم (غالى)

The nice man

C- الرجل (لطيف)

The hot coffee

D- القهوة (ساخن)

A nice woman

E- امرأة (لطيف)

_____ F- الشارع (ضيق)

The narrow street

_____ G- الأخ (غنى)

The rich brother

_____ H- الحجرة (مغلق)

The closed room

_____ I- تذكرة (رخيص)

A cheap ticket

_____ J- العصير (طازج)

The fresh juice

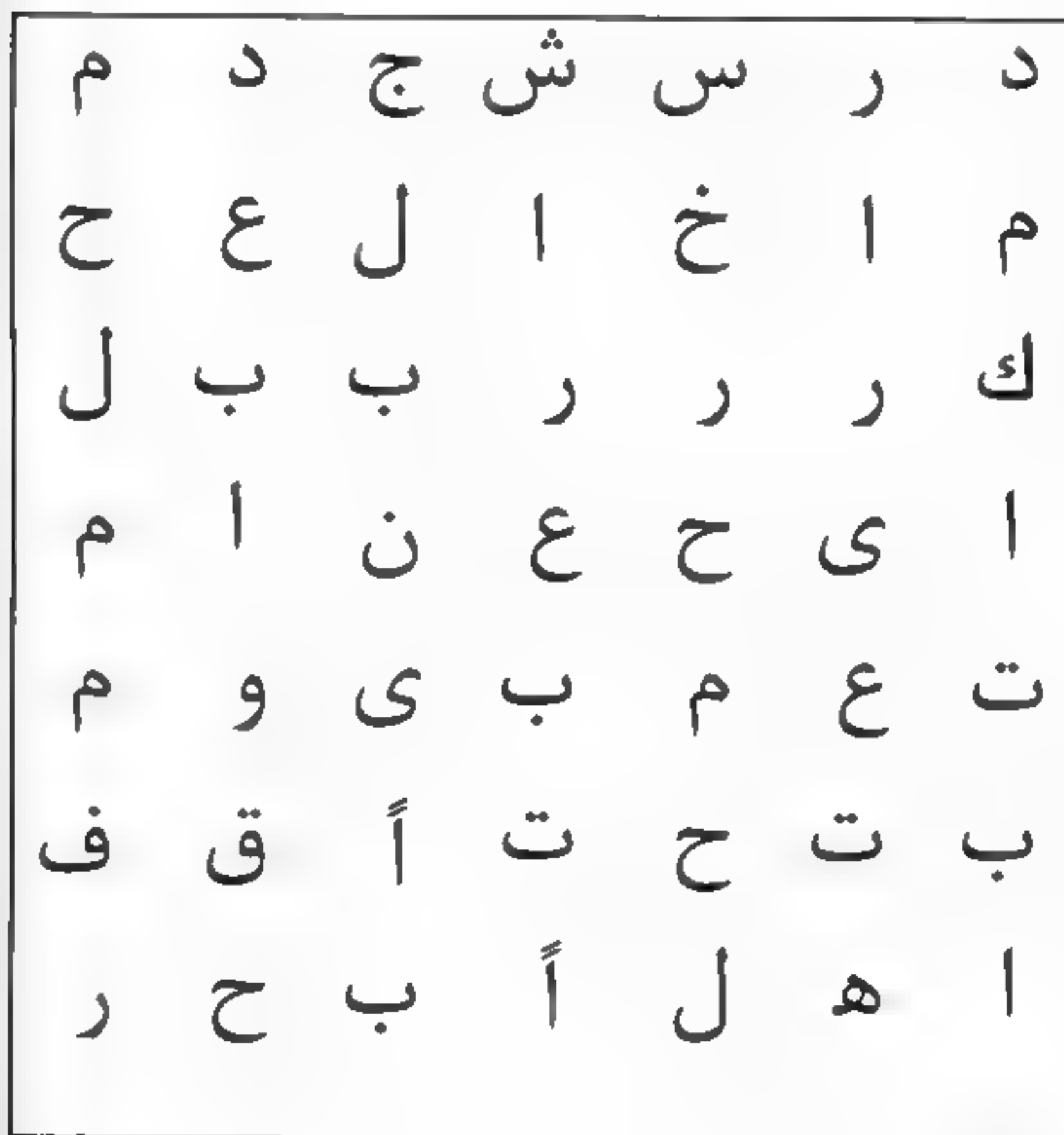
_____ K- الصديق (وفى)

The loyal friend

Exercise 15

There is a four-letter word hidden in this puzzle. Can you find it?

Find and cross out each of the words listed on the facing page. Cross out the words vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. When you're done, you'll be left with the hidden word.



اهلاً

hello *ahlan*

ام

mother *um*

اخ

brother *akh*

جد

grandfather *ged*

تحت

underneath *taHt*

بحر

sea *baHr*

عم

uncle *‘m*

شارع

street *shaar‘*

درس

lesson *darss*

لبن

milk *laban*

كاتب

kaateb *writer*

قف

stop *qef*

يوم

day *yoom*

محل

store *maHal*

مرحباً

welcome *marHaban*

Writing Exercises

Below are a number of exercises for you to practice your writing. Remember to position the letter correctly either above or underneath the line. Don't forget to place the dots in their right places.

أستاذ

master/teacher

إمرأة

woman

برج

tower

بعيد

far away

توائم

twins

ثمن

price

جرس

bell

حرية

freedom

حصان

horse

خروف

lamb

خطأ

error/mistake

دليل

guide

دافئ

warm

ذئب

wolf

رياح

wind

زهرة

flower

سيارة

car

شتاء

winter

شرطة

police

صيدلية

pharmacy

ضريبة

tax

ضيف

guest

طائرة

airplane

طبيب

doctor

ظلام

darkness

عروسة

doll/bride

عنوان

address

غرفة

room

غيور

jealous

فائز

winner

قصه

story

قاضی

judge

کثیر

much/many

کوبری

bridge

لغة

language

ليل

night

مدينة

city

موسيقى

music

نجوم

stars

هدوء

quietness

هدية

gift

ولاء

loyalty

يسار

left

يمين

right

واحد

one

اثنین

two

ثلاثة

three

أربعة

four

خمسة

five

ستة

six

سبعة

seven

ثمانية

eight

تسعة

nine

عشرة

ten

يوم
day

أسبوع
week

شهر
month

الأحد
Sunday

الاثنين
Monday

الثلاثاء

Tuesday

الأربعاء

Wednesday

الخميس

Thursday

الجمعة

Friday

السبت

Saturday

مرحباً

hello

اهلاً وسهلاً

hello & welcome

صباح الخير

good morning

السلام عليكم

peace be upon you
(a traditional greeting)

وعليكم السلام

and peace be upon
you (reply)

كيف حالك؟

how are you?

أنا بخير

I am fine

كم الساعة؟

what is the time?

العاشرة والرربع

quarter past ten

شكراً

thank you

من فضلك

please

الحمد لله

thank God

إن شاء الله

God willing

ما اسمك؟

what is your name?

أنا اسمي —

my name is —

ما عمرك؟

how old are you?

ماذا تعمل؟

what do you do?

أين تقيم؟

where do you live?

من أين أنت؟

where are you from?

هل تعرف العربية؟

do you know Arabic?

أين الفندق؟

where is the hotel?

أريد خريطة

I want a map

أحتاج مساعدة

I need help

مع السلامة

good bye

إلى اللقاء

until we meet again

Answers

Exercise 1

B-ق C-غ D-ك E-م F-ح G-ش H-ل I-ف J-ي

Exercise 2

A-ك B-ض C-ث D-ذ E-ظ F-س G-ي H-م I-ق J-ء

Exercise 3

B-نعم C-قلب D-صغىر E-جبل F-صىف

G-ربىع H-شتاء I-خرىف

Exercise 4

B-طرىق C-سهم D-مغلق E-حرىة F-صدىق

G-خروج H-سلام I-مفتش

Exercise 5

B(i), C(v), D(ii), E(iv), F(vii), G(vi), H(xi), I(x), J(ix),
K (viii)

Exercise 6

Alphabetical order of Arab countries, reading from right to left:

الأردن - البحرين - المغرب - اليمن - تونس - سوريا - قطر - لبنان -
ليبيا - مصر

Exercise 7

Alphabetical order of Arab capitals, reading from right to left:

أبوظبي - الخرطوم - الرباط - الرياض - بغداد - بيروت - دمشق -
صنعاء - طرابلس - عمان

Exercise 8

A(v), B(iv), C(i), D(ii), E(iii)

Exercise 9

A(iv), B(v), C(iii), D(ii), E(i)

Exercise 10

٢ -E	٩٦ -D	٧٠ -C	٢٠٠ -B	٨٠ -A
٣٥ -J	٢٢ -I	٩٥ -H	٤ -G	٤٠ -F

Exercise 11

A(vi), B(iv), C(vii), D(i), E(ii), F(iii), G(v)

Exercise 12

A- بيت B- سوق C- سهم D- نور E- خطر F- ممنوع G- جامعة H- صغير
I- القاهرة J- أوتوبيس K- جبل L- حفلة M- سكوت N- صحراء O- صديق
P- كلام Q- عائلة R- مغلق S- مشكلة T- فاكهة

Exercise 13

B- يوم سعيد C- البحر البعيد D- جبل عالي E- طفلة شقية F- بيت قديم
G- المدير الجديدة H- حجرة نظيفة I- الدور الثاني

Exercise 14

B- المطعم الغالي C- الرجل اللطيف D- القهوة الساخنة E- امرأة لطيفة
F- الشارع الضيق G- الأخ الغني H- الحجرة المغلقة I- تذكرة رخيصة
L- العصير الطازج F- الصديق الوفي

Exercise 15

Missing word: **عربي**

Afterword

Congratulations, you have just learned the Arabic alphabet!

You have studied 28 letters, the hamza, vowel marks, numerals, and how to form the feminine. You have also been introduced to handwritten Arabic. By now, you should have a solid grasp of the Arabic script and feel confident enough to read and write basic words. You can now begin developing your vocabulary and learning basic grammatical structures. Remember, practice makes perfect, so continue by copying examples of Arabic writing you see in magazines, newspapers, books, etc.

Where will you go from here? It's up to you to decide!

It all depends on the degree of Arabic proficiency you want to achieve. You may want to continue with classical Arabic studies, learn the culture, learn to read and communicate, or just understand simple signs and instructions. You are now empowered with a strong basis of the Arabic script.

Good luck!

مع أطيب الأمنيات

The Arabic Alphabet



thaa'



taa'



baa'



alif



daal



khaa'



Haa'



geem



seen



zaay



raa'



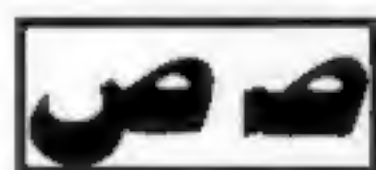
dhaal



Taa'



Daad



Saad



sheen



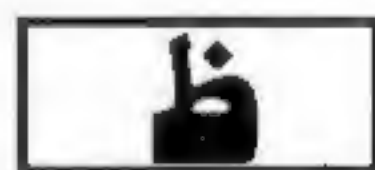
faa'



ghayn



'ayn



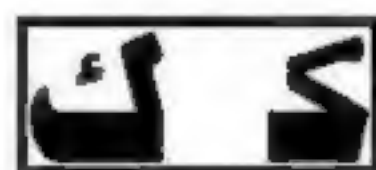
Zaa'



meem



laam



kaaf



qaaf



yaa'



waaw



haa'



noon

Arabic is written from right to left, this workbook opens on the other side. It was designed this way to help you get used to the Arabic format of writing.

About the Author

Naglaa Ghali is a journalist and English/Arabic interpreter. She has devoted much of her own time to developing funwitharabic.com, an online program that uses a fun approach to learning Arabic. Ghali's approach helps learners of the Arabic language overcome the sometimes challenging and overwhelming intricacies of the Arabic script. In this new workbook, *Write it in Arabic*, Ghali extends that same principle to paper and provides students with hands-on experience in writing Arabic.

To learn more about Ghali and *Fun with Arabic*, visit her Web site at www.funwitharabic.com.

WAIT...THIS IS THE BACK COVER!

Arabic is written and read from right to left.
Turn this book over to find the front cover.

Write it in Arabic

A Workbook and Step-by-Step Guide
to Writing the Arabic Alphabet
by Naglaa Ghali

Would you like to read and write Arabic but worry that it all looks like scribbles? Write it in Arabic will help you unveil the mysteries of the Arabic script and will guide you through the basic steps of learning to write the language.

With no lengthy introductions or linguistic complications this workbook offers a hands-on approach to learning how to read and write the Arabic alphabet. You will be introduced to the letters in sequence and practice how to write the different shapes of each letter.

This book will teach you how to join letters to form words, introduce you to new vocabulary, and guide you through pronunciation. This workbook also includes plenty of examples and exercises to help you write and read the Arabic language.

Write it in Arabic is a publication of

Fun with Arabic



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